

# The Daily State Chronicle.

VOL. VII.—NO. 132.

RALEIGH, N. C., THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 1890.

PRICE 5 CENTS.

## ELECTROCUTED.

### A Horrible and Ghastly Execution.

#### THE FIRST LEGAL DEATH BY ELECTRICITY ON RECORD.

#### An Awful, Sickening Failure at the First Trial.

#### The Criminal Pronounced Dead—But Threatened to Return to Life.

#### TWO THOUSAND VOLTS SENT THROUGH THE BODY FOR THREE MINUTES ON THE SECOND TRIAL.

Spectators Horrified and Fall Down in a Faint—An Awful Time With an Awful Affair—The Electric Button Burns Through the Skin Into the Flesh.

"THAT MAN NEVER SUFFERED ONE JOTA OF PAIN."

[By United Press.]

AUBURN, N. Y., Aug. 6.—With a short, sharp shock, painless so far as the world will ever know, the soul of William Kemmler was

Separated from the Body at 6:40 o'clock this morning. A cap adjusted to the head of a man bound captive in a strange looking chair, a lever quickly swung around the arc of a semi-circle, a quick convulsion, a sudden revival of muscular action, another turn of the lever, a pause, a room filled with sickening fumes, and twenty-seven witnesses of the

First Electricide in History knew that the death of Tillie Ziegler had been avenged in law, and the crime of William Kemmler expiated, so far as human hands could force its expiation.

An execution is always a ghastly sight. A lynching has about it an attendant excitement, born of hurried, boisterous action, which lends an

Artificial Strength to the Nerves of participants and onlookers alike. But the slow solemnity of a public execution, the quiet, formal preparations for a judicial killing are depressing enough to weaken the nerves and undermine the courage of the bravest.

At 6:38 the doors at the right of the execution room leading toward the execution room opened, and Warden Durston's figure appeared in the doorway. Behind him walked a spruce looking, broad-shouldered little man, full bearded, with carefully arranged hair moustering around his forehead. He was dressed in a suit of new clothing, a sack coat and vest of dark gray material, trousers of a mixed yellow pattern, and a white shirt, whose polished front was exposed directly below a little bow of lawn of a black and white check pattern.

This was William Kemmler, the man who was about to undergo the sentence of death. Behind him walked Dr. W. E. Houghton and Chaplain Yates. Kemmler was by far the coolest man in the party.

He did not look about the room with any special degree of interest. He hesitated as the door was closed behind him, and carefully looked by an attendant on the other side, as though he did not know exactly what to do.

"Give me a chair, will you?" said the warden. Some one quickly handed him a wooden chair which he placed in front and a little to the right of the execution chair, facing the little circle of men. Kemmler set down composedly, looked about him and then up and down

Without any Evidence of Fear or of special interest in the event. His face was not stolid; it was not indifferent. He looked, if anything, as though he was rather pleased at being the centre of interest.

Warden Durston stood at the left of the chair, with his hand on the back of it, and almost at the moment that Kemmler took his seat, he began to speak in short, quick periods. "Now gentlemen," he said, "this is William Kemmler. I have warned him that

He Has Got to Die, and if he has anything to say he will say it."

As the warden finished Kemmler looked up and said in high-keyed voice, without any hesitation, and as though he had prepared himself with the speech: "Well,

I Wish Every One Good Luck in the world, and I think I am going to a good place, and the papers have been saying a lot of stuff that isn't so. That's all I have to say."

With the conclusion of the speech he turned his back on the jury, took off his coat and handed it to the warden. This disclosed the fact that a hole had been cut from the band of the trousers down, so as to expose the base of the spine.

When his coat was off, Kemmler turned in the direction of the door through which he had come into the room and began to unbutton his vest. At the same time the warden was drawing the interfering drapery of his shirt through the hole in the trousers and cutting it off, so as to leave the little

surface of flesh, against which one of electrodes was to press, absolutely bare. Warden Durston called attention to the fact that it was not necessary to remove his vest, and Kemmler

Calmly Buttoned it Again and carefully arranged his tie. "Don't hurry about this matter," said the warden, "be perfectly cool."

He was perfectly cool. He was by all odds the coolest man in the room. When his tie was arranged he sat down in the electric chair as quietly as though he was sitting down to dinner. Warden Durston stood on the right and George Vieling, of Albany, on the left. They began immediately to adjust the straps around Kemmler's body, the condemned man holding up his arms, so as

To Give Them Every Assistance. When the straps had been adjusted about the body, the arms were fastened down and then the warden leaned over and parted his feet so as to bring his legs near the legs of the chair.

While the straps were being arranged, Kemmler said to the warden and his assistant:

"Take Your Time; don't be in a hurry. Be sure that everything is all right."

Two or three times he repeated these phrases. Warden Durston reassured him with the remark that it

Would Not Hurt Him, and that he (Durston) should be with him all through. But it was not fear that Kemmler felt. It was rather a certain pride in the exactness of the experiment. He seemed to have a greater

Interest in its Success than those who made the preparations for it, and who were watching its progress to its final fatal conclusion.

When the straps had been adjusted to the body and limbs, the warden placed his hand on Kemmler's head and held it against the rubber cushion, which ran down the back of the chair. Kemmler's eyes were turned toward the opposite side of the room. Before they had followed the warden in his movements. Then the condemned man made one or two remarks in a perfectly

Clear, Composed Tone of Voice: "Well, I wish every body good luck! was one of them, and "Darston, see that things are all right" was another.

Deputy Vieling unfastened the thumb screws which held the figure "4" at the back of the chair in place, and began to lower it so that the rubber cup which held the saturated sponge pressed against the top of Kemmler's head. The warden assisted in the preparation by holding Kemmler's head. When the cap had been adjusted and clamped in place, Kemmler said: "Oh, you'd

Better Press That Down Further, I guess; press that down." So the head piece was unclamped and passed further down.

While it was being done Kemmler said: "Well I want to do the best I can; I can't do any better than that." Warden Durston took in his hand the leather harness which was to be adjusted to Kemmler's head. It was a muzzle of broad leather straps which went across the forehead and the chin of the man in the chair. The top strap pressed down against the nose of Kemmler until it

Flattened it Down Slightly over his face. As the harness was put in place Dr. Spitzka, who was standing near the chair, said softly,

God Bless You, Kemmler. And the condemned man answered, "thank you," softly.

The door leading into the room where the switches were arranged was partly open. A man stood in the doorway. Behind him there were two other men. Which of them was to touch the lever and make the connection with the chair was not known. Warden Durston says it was never will be known.

The dynamo in the machine shop was running at good speed and the volt metre on the wall registered a little more than 1000 volts. Warden Durston turned to the assembled doctors—those immediately around the execution chair—and said: "Do the doctors say it is all right?"

Hardly a minute had elapsed since the adjustment of the strap. There was no time for Kemmler to have weakened, even if his marvelous courage had not been equal to the test of the further delay.

But there was no fear that he would have lost courage. He was as calm in the chair as he had been before he entered the room, and during the process of his confinement by the straps which held him close.

At the warden's question, Dr. Fell stepped forward with a long syringe in his hand, and quickly, but deftly, Wetted the two Sponges which were at the electrodes—one on top of the head, and the other at the base of the spine. The water which he put on them was impregnated with salt. Dr. Spitzka answered the warden's question with a sharp "all right," which was echoed by others about him. "Ready," said Durston again, and then

"Good-bye."

He stepped to the door, and through the opening said to some one in the next room (but to whom will probably never be known with certainty):

"Everything is Ready."

In almost immediate response and as the stop watches in the hands of some of the witnesses registered 6.43, the electric

Current was Turned In. There was a sudden convulsion of the frame in the chair.

A Spasm Went Over It from head to foot, confined by the straps and springs that held it firmly so that no limb or other part of the body stirred more than a small fraction of an inch from its resting place.

The twitching that the muscles of the face underwent gave to it for a moment an Expression of Pain, but no cry escaped from the lips, which were free to move at will. No sound came forth to suggest that consciousness lasted more than an infinite small fraction of a second—beyond the calculation of the human mind. The body remained in this rigid position for seventeen

seconds. The jury and the witnesses, who had up to this moment remained seated, came hurriedly forward and surrounded the chair. There was no movement of the body beyond the first convulsion.

It Was Not a Pretty Sight—this man in his shirt sleeves, bound hand, foot, body and even head, with a heavy frame-work pressing down on the top of his skull, still with the stiffness of death.

Dr. McDonald held his stop watch in his hand, and as the seconds flew by, he noted their passage. Dr. Spitzka, too, looked at the stop watch, and as the tenth second expired, he cried out:

"Stop," cried other voices about. The warden turned to the doorway and called out: "Stop!" to the man at the lever. A quick movement of the arm and the electric current was switched off. There was a relaxation of the body in the chair—a slight relaxation—but the straps held it so firmly in the chair that there was not a quarter of an inch variation in the position of any part of the frame. The quiet little group around the chair grew business like.

"He's Dead," said Dr. Spitzka, calmly. "Oh, he's dead," re-echoed Dr. McDonald with firm confidence. The rest of the witnesses noted their acquiescence. There was no question in the mind of anyone but that the stiff, upright object before them was lifeless.

This was the programme; this the inevitable effect. The next question was, what was to be done with the body.

Dr. Spitzka stepped forward and called attention to the appearance of the nose, which, he said, had an undoubted post mortem color. No one disputed this. Dr. Spitzka turned around in a business-like way and pointing to the harness said: "Oh, undo that. Now the body can be taken to the hospital."

The warden replied that he could not let any of the witnesses go until he had their certificates. All of this conversation took but a moment. Dr. Balch was bending over the body looking at the exposed skin. Suddenly he cried out sharply, "Dr. McDonald,

See That Rupture." In a moment Dr. Spitzka and Dr. McDonald had bent over and were looking where Dr. Balch was pointing.

At a Little Red Spot on the hand that rested in the right arm of the chair. The index finger of the hand had curved backward as the flexor muscles contracted, and had scraped a small hole in the skin at the base of the thumb on the back of the hand. There was nothing strange in this alone; but what was strange was that the little rupture was dripping.

"Turn the current on instantly," cried Dr. Spitzka. Faces grew white and forms fell back from the chair. Warden Durston sprang to the doorway and cried,

"Turn on the Current." But the current could not be turned on. When the signal to stop had come the operator had pressed the little button which gave the sign to the engineer to stop the dynamo. The dynamo was almost at a standstill and the volt metre registered an almost imperceptible current. The operator sprang to the button and gave a sharp quick signal. There was a rapid response, but quick as it was it was

Not Quick Enough to anticipate the signs of what may or may not have been returning consciousness. As the group of horror-stricken witnesses stood helplessly by, all eyes fixed on the chair, Kemmler's

Lips Began to Drop Spittle, and in a moment more, his chest moved, and from his mouth came a heavy stertorous sound, quickening and increasing with every respiration—his respiration it was. There was no voice but that of the warden, crying to the operator to turn on the current, and the wheezing sound, half groan, which forced itself past the tightly closed lips sounded through the still chamber

With Ghastly Distinctness. Two thousand volts were sent through the body in the chair. How long it was kept in action no one knows. To the excited group of men about the chair it seemed

An Interminable Time. For the men who stood in front of the volt metre in the adjoining room and threw the switch lever over backward and forward, time had no measurement. Dr. Daniel, who looked at his watch excitedly and who throughout had an approximate idea of the time at least, said that it was four and a half minutes in all. The warden's assistants who stood over the dynamo, said that on the second signal the machinery was run only three and a half minutes altogether. It will never be known with any degree of accuracy what the space of time was. No one was anxious to give the

Signal to Stop. All dreaded the responsibility of offering to the man a chance to revive or to give again at least those appearances of returning animation which had

Started and so Horrified the witness a few minutes before. Some of the witnesses hurried away from the sight. One of them

Lay Down Faint and Sick. It takes a long, long time to tell the story. It seemed a long time reaching a climax.

In reality there were but seventy-three seconds in the interval which elapsed between the moment when the first sound issued from Kemmler's lips until the response to the signal came from the dynamo room. It came with the same suddenness that had marked the first shock which passed through Kemmler's body. The sound which had horrified the listeners about the chair was cut off sharply as the

Body Once More Became Rigid. The slimy ooze still dropped from the mouth and ran slowly in three lines down the beard and into the grey vest.

Twice there was a twitching of the body as the electricians in the next room threw the current on and off. There was to be about the killing. The dynamo was run up to its highest speed.

No Mistake This Time. As the anxious group stood silently watching the body, suddenly there arose from it a white vapor bearing with it a pungent and sickening odor.

The Body Was Burning. Again were cries to stop the current and again the warden sprang to the door and gave the quick order to his assistants. The current stopped and then there was a relaxation of the body. No doubt this time that the current had done its work, if not well, at least completely. Dr. Fell who stood at the side of the special correspondent of the United Press, turned and said, "Well there is no doubt about one thing; the man

Never Suffered an iota of Pain." The autopsy was begun at about nine o'clock. It was in charge of Dr. Jenkins, of New York, (who handled the knife), Dr. Daniel, Dr. McDonald and Dr. Spitzka. Dr. Fell prepared the blood from the body for examination under the microscope. It was found when the body was spread out on the table that a very severe rigor mortis had set in.

There was little relaxation, and it was with difficulty that the corpse was straightened out. On examination it was found that the second electrode had

Burned Through the Skin and into the flesh at the base of the spine, making a scar nearly five inches in diameter. The heart, lungs and other organs were taken out and were found to be in good healthy condition. They will be preserved for further examination. The brain also was taken out, and it too will be carefully examined.

The examination of the brain showed that the

Brain Was Hardened directly under the spot where the electric current had come in contact with the skull, and that the blood at that spot was hardened, showing that the current had had direct action on the brain.

Kemmler's Crime. AUBURN, N. Y., Aug. 6.—The crime for which Kemmler was executed was in itself one worthy of only passing notice, and had it not been for the method of paying the death penalty would have attracted little attention; for the murderer and his victim had lived only in dissipation and debauchery.

Kemmler was the son of a Philadelphia butcher, and was born May 9, 1860. He eked out an existence as a huckster about the suburbs of Philadelphia until 1887, when he married a woman named Ida Porter, of Camden, N. J. She had another husband living, and two days after his marriage Kemmler eloped with Tillie Ziegler, also a married woman and one of his customers. They fled to Buffalo and lived there for eighteen months. Quarrels were frequent for both were addicted to drink, and Kemmler always brutal in his disposition, frequently abusing his wife. On the morning of March 28th, 1889, the pair indulged in a fierce quarrel over money matters. In a drunken rage Kemmler attacked his mistress with a hatchet with which he struck her three times mostly about the head. The woman was dead before he had finished his work.

DR. DIXON'S SUCCESSOR. Rev. J. A. Cunningham, Presiding Elder of Warrenton District Named. (Special Cor. STATE CHRONICLE.)

DURHAM, N. C., Aug. 5.—We were under the impression here that Rev. Junius P. Harris, of this place, would be the successor of Dr. Dixon, until seeing your paper of to-day, in which we find that it is reported from "headquarters" that Dr. Black is the man. He certainly would make a good one; but there still may be some doubt as to who the man will be. [It was a local, and as a rumor.—Editor.]

The object in writing this is to present the name of Rev. J. A. Cunningham, of the N. C. Conference. Of all the men in or out of the State, we know no man more peculiarly and better qualified than he. What a saintly mother, too, "Aunt Lucy," his wife, would make to all these orphaned ones. Give us "Uncle Jipe" and "Aunt Lucy" and the entire State will say Amen!

MANY FRIENDS. WASHINGTON COUNTY FOR VANCE. Resolutions Adopted By the Democratic County Convention.

The following resolution was adopted: The Democratic Convention of Washington county endorse the past career of Senator Z. B. Vance, having perfect confidence in his great ability and integrity; and as far as we have any influence ask the State of North Carolina to entrust her interests to him in the Senate of the United States.

A Big Lighthouse for North Carolina. (By United Press.) WASHINGTON, Aug. 6.—Anderson & Barr, of Jersey City, N. J., have been awarded a contract for building a lighthouse on outer Diamond Shoal, off Cape Hatteras, coast of North Carolina, at the bid of \$485,000.

LATE NEWS NOTES. Bishop Duncan is presiding at the M. E. District Conference at Wadesboro:

A Wilson county tobacco grower has refused \$30 per hundred for his entire crop just as it stands and competent judges say he is wise in so doing.—Wilson Advance.

Prof. Hamilton McMillian retires from the Farmer and Scottish Chief, published at Red Springs, and Mr. R. T. Covington assumes entire control, as editor and proprietor.

## THE CAMPAIGN ENDED

### AMID PROMISCUOUS KNOCK DOWN AND DRAG OUT FIGHTS.

South Carolina Glad it is Over—Tillman Has a Big Majority of Convention Notes—But the Straightouts Will Fight Him to the Bitter End.

(By United Press.) CHARLESTON, S. C., Aug. 6.—The most intensely bitter political campaign ever held in this State was concluded at Waterboro to-day in the midst of a drenching shower of rain, and a complete collapse of the platform, and a lot of promiscuous knock down and drag out fights.

The "lie," which has been a common occurrence at the meetings of late, was note changed from the stand—at least not the "lie" direct, but the crowd which numbered 1,000, indulged in it quite frequently.

In one of the scurrilous an enthusiastic straightout had his head broken by a Tillman town marshal, and several Tillman enthusiasts were badly handled. The whole State is glad that the campaign is over. The result is that Tillman has 187 to 320 votes elected to the convention. But the fight is not yet over, and the straightout Democrats do not give in. They will fight Tillman to the bitter end.

Another Alliance candidate has appeared in the field in the first Charleston district on the person of H. A. Metz, of Lexington, who has been endorsed for Congress against W. H. Brawley, of Charleston. Metz is a lawyer, but is understood to favor the Sub-Treasury bill. It is also believed that W. J. Tolbert, the Alliance State lecturer will be run in Geo. D. Tillmans district. This makes three Alliance candidates already in the field with two districts to hear from.

THE PIEDMONT SECTION. Col. Cowles Will Be Nominated to Succeed Himself—Barber's Chances for Solicitor Good—Sudden Death—Tobacco Notes, &c.

(Special Cor. STATE CHRONICLE.) WINSTON, N. C., Aug. 6.—Mr. W. W. Barber, of Wilkes county, was run up on this morning while reared back in his chair on the Quincey Hotel porch. He is the Democratic candidate for Solicitor of this district against Thomas Settle, and is very hopeful over the coming election. Mr. Barber has scraped off those presbyterians that used to set off the sides of his physiog and now supports a moustache which alone adds greatly to his good looks. When questioned as to his chances in the coming campaign he gave the writer to understand that unless things changed a great deal more than they usually do he could carry very nearly every county, and every one at least that has ever stood in the Democratic column in a solicitorial election. He seemed more interested in talking to Congress than his own for election to the office for which he is a candidate. He said that if Cleveland county would give a majority in its primaries for Cowles, he would be nominated to succeed himself. Private telegrams received yesterday indicate that the Colonel has a majority there and this is taken as an assurance of his victory. To beat Congressman Cowles would work a great injury to the party in this north-western section. The people here have implicit confidence in him.

Monday evening at 6 o'clock in Salem Mr. John Daniel Siewers dropped dead in his seventy-third year. The cause of his death was thought to be heart failure. Mr. Siewers was one of the most estimable and highly honored men in this section, was born in the West Indies while his parents were missionaries there, moved here at the age of five, and with the exception of a few years spent at college in the North he has been one of the foremost citizens ever since his entrance into manhood. A good, noble Moravian has gone to rest. Among the stricken ones he leaves a son, Dr. N. S. Siewers, one of our most estimable and promising physicians.

Yesterday the writer chanced to meet that genial and jolly good fellow, W. V. Clifton, of Raleigh. He had just been up to the "State of Wilkes" where he found a big boom since the iron horse had found its way into that section. As agent for the Berlin Iron Bridge Company, he was awarded the contract to build a large county bridge over the Yadkin.

The mercantile agency of R. G. Dun will establish at an early date a branch office in our city. Mr. Dudley F. Young, manager of the agency at Richmond, Va., was here yesterday, and closed agreements and made arrangements to open up here with Mr. H. Taylor Goddin as manager. This will be a big thing for our business enterprises.

The electric street cars here carried two thousand, six hundred and seventy-five passengers between Saturday and Sunday nights. Don't this prove that a good line will pay well if run right? That's the kind we have here.

Winston invariably downs Danville on internal revenue collections on tobacco each week. This week our collections were \$4,000 over their's and Winston manufacturers shipped 237,394 1-3 pounds of plug.

The public school system of Forsyth county is one of the best in the State. Superintendent Butner is greatly in favor of all the progressive ideas of the most prominent educators and he is trying to put them in practice here. Monday the school board spent the entire day in the discussion of building new school houses in several parts of the county.

M. VICTOR.

## AN IMPORTANT MATTER.

Section 2674 of the Code—(Election Law as amended)—is as follows:

The boards of commissioners of the several counties shall elect, on or before the first Monday of September preceding each election, one or more persons for each election precinct, who shall act as registrars of voters for such precinct. Said board shall make publication of the names of the persons so elected, at the court house door, immediately after such appointment, and shall cause a notice to be served upon said persons by the sheriff. If any registrar shall die or neglect to perform his duties, the justices of the peace for the township, or a majority of said justices, or the Clerk of the Superior Court of the county, in case said justices or a majority of them fail to meet, may appoint another in his place. And no person who is a candidate for any office shall be a registrar or judge or inspector of an election.

This section provides— 1st. That thirty days' notice of a new registration shall be given before the beginning of such registration.

2nd. That the registration books shall be kept open thirty days immediately preceding the day of closing the same.

3rd. That the registration books shall be closed on the second Saturday preceding the election.

By virtue of this section it is essential that at least sixty days elapse between the ordering of a new registration by the Board of Commissioners and the closing of the books.

The books must be closed October 25th and hence it is necessary that a new registration (which is made NECESSARY by Sec. 2,676 as amended) must be ordered at least sixty days antecedent thereto i. e. by August 25th inst.

This matter should be attended to at once and a new registration ordered in every county, where it has not already been done, by August 25th. This will require a special meeting of the commissioners, but it is of such vital importance that no question should be raised. Let the County Democratic chairman and the chairman of the various boards of commissioners look after this IMMEDIATELY. There ought to be no delay, and we hope that the press of the State will at once see to it that the proper parties understand the necessity of IMMEDIATE ACTION. After August 25th, it will be too late.

A PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT. The announcement that Rev. W. S. Black, D. D., had been appointed to succeed Dr. Dixon as Superintendent of the Orphan Asylum was premature. Dr. Black is strongly backed for the place and would make an excellent Superintendent, as would several others who have been named, but no meeting of the Board has yet been called to take action.

MASTER WORKMAN POWDERLY says of the bayonet force bill that "there is more intimidation in four lines of it than in all the 'Southern outrages' since the war." And yet Mr. POWDERLY is not a Southern fire-eater.

REED TALKS OF DECEMBER. The Speaker Will Hold Congress to Pass the Force Bill.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Aug. 6.—Speaker Reed being asked to-day when he thought Congress would adjourn, replied: "If I have any influence with the House, and I think I have a little, the House will not adjourn till the Election bill has passed, not even if we have to sit here till next December."

The way in which the Speaker said this left no doubt in the minds of his hearers, and it was said before two or three Congressmen, as well as the correspondent, that the Speaker meant every word of what he said, and was quite prepared to hold the House together till the bill became a law.

"Will you insist on the passage of the Lodge bill, or will a modified measure suit you?"

"The bill will have to be acceptable to the House," was the Speaker's significant reply.

POLITICAL GOSSIP. Orange county instructed for Vance for the Senate.

Congressman Blount, of Georgia, has been renominated for Congress for the tenth time. He has great influence there.

The Camden county convention instructed Mr. J. D. Boushall to cast the vote in the State convention if no delegate was present.

The Polk county convention held yesterday at Columbia instructed for Col. Frank Cox for Congress first, last and all the time. The efforts of the friends of this popular gentleman in putting him forward are meeting with gratifying success.

Maj. George T. Barnes, who has represented Alexander Stephens' district in Congress for three terms, has withdrawn from the contest for nomination, conceding that young Tom Watson, the Alliance candidate, has secured sufficient votes to win the nomination. Watson is a lawyer—earned enough money to educate himself and is said to be one of the brainiest young men in all the South.

W. H. & R. S. TUCKER & CO. Carpet Department. Preparing for Fall work. Early arrivals of desirable patterns. All grades, and the lowest price.

W. H. & R. S. TUCKER & CO.